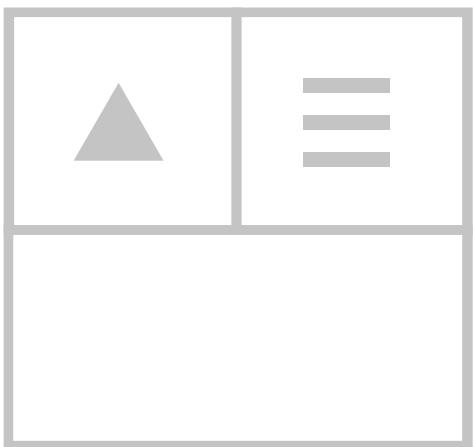




EDICIONES
METALES
PESADOS

CHILEAN
DELEGATION
20-24 OCTOBER







INTRODUCTION






To define Chile, even from its origins, there are many voices. Some of them say that its name comes from the Trile bird (*Xanthornus cayenensis*) that, when flying over the skies, sings “thrile”, which later evolved into Chile. Others claim that it comes from the Quechua word 'chiri', which means cold or snow, as the tall mountain range of Los Andes, which crosses it from north to south, or like the crystalline glaciers. However, the most accepted definition would come from the Aymara word “chilli”, which has two meanings: “the end of the world” and “the deepest place on Earth”.

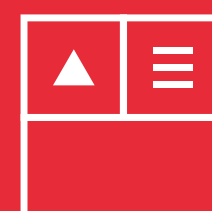
Chilean literature has a position as a Latin American referent, writing its own history, yesterday thanks to the poetry of its Nobel Prizes Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, today with a well-stocked ecosystem of books that enables one to integrate aesthetical, symbolic, cultural, and politic values to the debate.

In 2020, the pandemic crashed into the reality of the world, and also of the publishing industry. The difficulties went from the logistics in the chain of production to the intermittent closure of the markets. However, the Chilean publishing scene was able to do the unthinkable, and digital and physical copies in all genres followed an upward trend.

According to the 2020 statistical report by the ISBN agency, digital publications grew in an historical 166.9%, compared to 2019. Physical books did not stay out of the explosion of publications, and grew in a 15.96%.

In this ecosystem, as well, the coexistence of digital and physical books was complementary. While university and academic publishers are successful with the digital books, there are also those who mix physical and digital, installing specialized topics with a bold design, and those who deliver entertainment, understanding, and adventures to children in innovative formats and materials that favor the experience of reading physical books. Because the 10 publishing houses that have arrived to the Frankfurt Book Fair, thanks to the coordination of the Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio, through the Consejo Nacional del Libro y la Lectura and the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores through ProChile, is only the tip of the iceberg of a very talented literary industry based on Chile, which is nowadays looking forward to internationalize their catalogues.





INTERVIEW



INTERVIEW

EDICIONES METALES PESADOS

PAULA BARRÍA / ELENA MONTES

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This emblematic publishing house came to life 16 years ago to connect the society with the production of knowledge, which traditionally ends up confined between the academic walls. To dive deeper into the character and hallmark of this important project, we talked with Paula Barría, CEO of the company.

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You were born with the objective of meeting the academic needs in areas of aesthetics, philosophy, social sciences, and literature. 16 years later, what is the place you think Metales Pesados has within the Chilean publishing industry?

At first we started as a publishing house that wanted to take those gaps in the academic production and to give them a language not only academic but that was also connected to society. We are not a purely academic publisher, but we also publish essays that present critical depth.

We are each time more into that essay profile, which intersects different areas, not only in the literature field, but also of arts, sociology, and a bit about education. All of this is also related to critical thinking, which is part of our hallmark. With time, the profile of our publishing house has become clear, and it does not have to do only with it, but also with the Metales Pesados bookstores, that have the same profile. There, we have a joint labor of reinforcement about what it is required, what is present, and what is being discussed.

There is another thing that is important, and it has to do with the fact that we also publish many essays in these areas, both by Chilean and Latin American scholars.

The editorial style of Metales Pesados, along with its design, is soaked as well by experience. In this sense, how would you define the hallmark of your work?

Well, it is basically critical thinking in different areas. And that critical thinking is related. They are not always easily classified so, when I talk about “Sociologías del Arte”, it is a book that has a sociologist approach, but could be classified under sociology, but also under art, and under cultural critique, and under literature, for instance. I have the feeling that nowadays this is becoming more common, people in the academia is not so close-minded in their own areas, but are beginning to intersect.

There is another thing that has happened to us, precisely about the Frankfurt Book Fair, that is that you begin to ask yourself: well, and what interest could Frankfurt have, for instance, to think in a book about Heidegger written by a Chilean scholar? Then one says: Heidegger is German; it is logical to think that everything is said over there, what interest could they have on this, or when I talk about Foucault, Benjamin, etc.; authors that have also been very important for the Chilean, Latin American, and International academia. Then I thought: it is interesting as well to make a situated reading, a reading that comes from Latin America, that picks these authors and makes a new reading of these thinkers, for a given time in another place. I think that they are readings that may be of interest even there. Somehow the importance of these authors and their thinking is shown in their universality. The fact that they can



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also be thought of from here and there can be a reading from the optics of a thinker who said something in Germany or France or Italy is also a refresh, a new perspective on what the same authors mean in their respective countries.

On the other hand, the visuality of the book is no trifle for us, because it somehow defines us. We, as a publishing house, put a lot of dedication on the aesthetical aspect of the book. If I think in essay books, it is of our interest that the person who picks it up may take notes on it, underline it, that the book may have the opportunity to be gentle with the reader, and it is not tiresome due to the fact that “it will have more pages, so it may be more expensive”. We are very careful about that. And we are also very careful with the aesthetic presence of the book. That is, all the covers of our books are works of art, by Chilean artists in most cases. This is because we are interested, not only in delivering a basis for artistic thinking, but also to be able, through the book, to disseminate the production of national artists. Then that enables us to use this basis as a place of representation for other areas that are related to what we do. And that is part of our policy. But they are not figurative, the idea is for them to say something coming from abstraction that would comment on what is critically being said inside the book.

What do you look for when choosing who is to be published and who is not by Metales Pesados?

That process is a difficult one, because with the number of books that are published in a year, and the number of texts that we receive, it is very difficult to carry it out, but we have a more or less defined system to make this selection. The first thing is that we overread every takes draft we receive, and determine if we are interested or not. We first look for those texts on the areas that we are prioritizing that year, because we have annual plans for different areas. Then in many cases we make a selection for a committee of experts who recommend or not certain books, as they are of a more technical nature. On that basis, we select the books that we are going to publish, which is also related to the amount of resources we have at our disposal. Sometimes there are books on which we are very interested, but we cannot make them. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to publish them.





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Metales Pesados has also become in a referent, not only at a national level, but also a Latin American one. What other territories would you like to reach?

I would like to reach everywhere. I would love for those who publish with us, who are usually scholars whose work is really put somewhere else, to be in any place. And in that sense, one part of the selection is that they must be subjects that are universal, and there I see two things that are very interesting. First, the Asian market, which would be an extremely interesting place to be. Very interesting. I do not have any experience, any approach to the Asian market, it is an absolute fantasy for me. If they ask me where I would like to be in ten more years, I would say that, hopefully, with a couple of books translated in Asia, in China, for instance. I would love that.

The other thing I would like is that there are specialized agencies that know publishers who are interested in the fields that we work, and who have a better knowledge of the market of publishers who buy copyrights for worldwide translation. I think that that is an expectation much easier to meet in Frankfurt, to find nowadays those publishers who are related to your own work, to exchange copyrights or to sell one of our books to translate it in another country. Or an agency that would be in charge of our specialized hallmark and that they could, with their specialized work, maintain our permanent presence in that international market, because that requires specialized knowledge. There are agencies that do that kind of work. That is one of the things that we are interested in today in Frankfurt.



EDICIONES METALES PESADOS

For 16 years, Metales Pesados has been building a supporting place for those texts that are necessary to fill the gaps of academic production. Specialized in essays, this emblematic publishing house intersects several areas of knowledge in its catalogue. Always with critical thoroughness and a language that tends to the bridge between the academic world and society. A consolidated publisher, reinforced by the resulting alloy from the joint labor of the firm and bookstores, it positions Chilean and Latin American works in the medium. The thorough critical review of its content; an aesthetic element that is carefully implicit: those are the elements that shape the character of Metales Pesados, the publishing house that supports the tradition of thought coming from this “other place”.

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ISBN 978-956-6048-23-7



EL PENSAMIENTO DEL GRITO (THE THOUGHT OF THE SCREAM)

Author. Andrea Potestà

Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics, and Education

140 pages / Year 2020

This piece of work is an invitation to the deconstruction of language and the dismantling of all pretensions to dominate gestuality. Through Artaud, Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, Lacoue-Labarthe and Derrida, this book establishes a framework without history that attempts to question the bottom of material and primitive sounding expressivity. Its pages pretend to put into evidence the retroactive effect of language, its impulse to become a home, not of the «being», as Heidegger proposed, but of the specters of the body that secretly inhabits it as an absent presence, unsettling, and suspensive.

ISBN 978-956-6048-25-1



SOCIOLOGÍA(S) DEL ARTE Y DE LAS POLÍTICAS CULTURALES (SOCIOLOGY/IES OF ART AND CULTURAL POLICIES)

Author. Tomás Peters

Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics, and Education

208 pages / Year 2020

This author proposes to outline the transformation of the analytic models of sociology of art. Through following some of the theoretical traces that will allow us to locate the meaning of art in modernity, in this book we will find Luhmann, Adorno-Benjamin, Howard S. Becker and Pierre Bourdieu. The most relevant contribution of this book is the dialogue that it establishes between the sociology of art and cultural policies. The confrontation between them would have constituted a virtuous circle from which a sociological work appeared, that thinks the work of art «as a critical-cultural device that intervenes in the social field and that is able to productivize from contemporary cultural policies».

ISBN 978-956-6048-29-9



LA PERFORMATIVIDAD DE LAS IMÁGENES (THE PERFORMATIVITY OF IMAGES)

Author. Andrea Soto Calderón

Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics, and Education

144 pages / Year 2021

Traditionally, image has been declared non-apt to criticize reality, while nowadays it is stated that we are immersed in a visual culture that demands to be able to find orientation in it. While most of the images that circulate are meant for the consumption of objects and not for the construction of points of view, this does not imply that they are not artifacts of a speculative, poetic and political potency. This restless book is about the persistent attempt to change the question from what are the images, to which are their ways of doing, their performativity. It is an interjection to compose other forms of power, to relate what has no relation, exercising in common the potency of what is shared.

ISBN 978-956-6048-35-0



CEREMONIAS DE LO INVISIBLE (CEREMONIES OF THE INVISIBLE)

Author. David Oubiña

Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics, and Education

100 pages / Year 2021

How to grasp what cannot be seen with an artifact that only captures the evident movement of things? That is the defiant question that David Oubiña poses. This text proposes the reader to think cinema not from a representation device, but as a machine that is able to perceive the limits of experience. One where cinematographic images lose their transparent character to delve into the dilemmas and tensions of what is real.

ISBN 978-956-6048-46-6



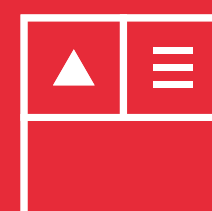
ENSEÑANDO A SENTIR (TEACHING TO FEEL)

Author. Macarena García González

Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics, and Education

184 pages / Year 2021

This book explores the relations between ethics and aesthetics in fiction for children, focusing in themes that are considered as «difficult» or «controversial» according to the current considerations on what would be appropriated for infancy. The author critically examines the premise that says that children's literature is useful for learning about emotions, by questioning adult-centered epistemologies and conservative fears that underlie the use of books to teach how to feel. In eight chapters, it explores empathy, violence, xenophobia, death, migration, gender and poverty in books for children, cinematographic animations, the discourses and consumption practices. The question weaved through this volume is how certain emotional repertoires that are offered and favored in fiction for children are intersected with inequities and exclusions in contemporary society.



EXCERPTS



EL PENSAMIENTO DEL GRITO (THE THOUGHT OF THE SCREAM)

Author. Andrea Potestà
Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics,
and Education
140 pages
Year 2020
ISBN 978-956-6048-23-7

Premise

Scream and gesture as philosophical problems

Our view of man will remain superficial as long as we do not return to this origin, so long as we do not rediscover the primordial silence beneath the noise of words, and as long as we do not describe the noise that breaks silence.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

In the text Notes on Gesture, Giorgio Agamben claims that our times are characterized by the fact of having lost the gestures and adds that, for this same reason, «it is obsessed with them, at the same time». Contemporaneity would be decided by this loss and by the desperate attempt to recover the naturality of gesture. The works of Nietzsche, Proust, Rilke, Warburg, would be a testimony for this, but also some scientific investigations by the end of the 19th Century: the one by neurologist Gilles de la Tourette who was trying to measure gestuality, or the one by photographer Eadweard Muybridge who was searching for the pose of movement. All of this gives an account, says Agamben, of the contemporary attempt to save what is lost, although, at the same time, all of these attempts represent threats of losing it forever, inasmuch as the search for the objectivation of the gesture does nothing but consequently moving away the human being from their vital and originary dynamic. Thus, in front of the gesture, we are condemned to the dilemma of objectifying it (losing it) or assigning it to the ineffable (setting it into an immemorial past).

Nevertheless, what does it imply to talk about the gesture as a loss? To «lose» something, an umbrella or a memory, a word or time, one must possess it in the first place. And this supposition of a «possession», for the case mentioned, is everything except evident: What does it mean to «possess» a gesture? Does it make any sense to claim that, for example, an animal «has» or «possesses» gestures? Are those a «property» of it? Does it have them or uses them as if it were a tool? Should not we rather admit that the gestuality of an animal is inseparable from its own existence? But if in the gesture we do not have the distance of «possessing» and it does not make sense to consider gestuality as a property, Agamben's idea that humanity would have lost its gestures, rather than referring to an effective anteriority, that is not happening or is present anymore, is alluding to an essential condition: the loss has already occurred since ever, it marks the beginning itself of the existence of a human being. There is no meaning or knowledge outside this loss, which, consequently, is not properly so. Strictly speaking, the gestures have never been possessed, and this is because it only makes sense to talk about their «possession» of their already fulfilled loss. One does only «have» them when you lose them, and one «has» them as what was lost. When one says «this is who I am», «this is my body», «this are my gestures», only then, this is, in the sought objectivation of the body, the gestures are mine like a retired property, like the object of suspended knowledge, like the rest of that saying.

Considered in this way, gestures appear as a fracture in the presence, which turns them inappropriate and inappropriable for every objectivation process. But it is an appropriation that is, at the same time, the most proper thing to presence, the condition of its own presentation. Therefore, the possibility of accessing a knowledge of the body that does not lay on this fundamental negativity does not exist. To visualize this, let us think in the philosophic paradigm of auto-affection, in the hands that touch each other, which show, from Aristotle to Merleau-Ponty, a becoming «affected» from one part that is referred

to another (to the «auto») which is rather the foundation of the act of affecting. In the sensibility that feels itself, in the body that touches itself, the selfhood becomes unfolded, it is self and other at the same time. As a necessity, then, auto-affection is experienced as a hetero-affection: the self becomes the other for itself, it feels and is felt at the same time, it lives in perceiving and dies in being perceived, it is both active sensation and motionless body at once, source of heat and a corpse. Now, we could say that the distance between the «auto» and the «hetero», the distance in what is proper that immediately turns it improper, is the place of gestuality. Between the perceptive act and the perceived there is a remain that is present as long as it is unrepresentable (unrepresentable, non-objectifiable).

By conceiving the gesture as the unrepresentable of presence, one totally exceeds Agamben's argument: further than according to the chronological division between the «before» allegedly appropriated and the «after» expropriated and searching what is lost, further than according to the model of a lack as fall and desolation, a gap is opened to think the gesture starting from the mutual belonging of the proper and the improper, of language and silence, of meaning and sound. The gesture is not set on a «great beyond» of language, nor on a «previousness» that has been forever lost just as paradise. On the contrary, it is that which from here, in the present that is immanent to meaning, disrupts the word and disadjusts it, opens it to its occurrential dimension. Instead of assuming our situation as a loss, as a lack of plenitude that is not able to regain access to its gestural origin, there exists the possibility of thinking the gesture without referring it to the possession of a meaning of its own, converting it into the «vanishing point» of the meanings.

It is this attempt that these books are looking forward to discuss. The authors whose reflections related to the body and language have been followed represent different modalities, each one different in what concerns to their means of execution, as well as the explicit objectives, of conducting a

displacement, of entering into the motive of the gesture through a shift in the register of the philosophical discourse. To promote this displacement, the language of philosophy itself has needed to be tuned, to attune with the body, to avoid neglecting the gesture to the space of the ineffable, without turning it either into an object of knowledge. May this be through a word from a poet, an artist, a phenomenologist or genealogist, may this be by the light of a fully deployed reason or letting oneself go to the nocturnal depths of a writing on the verge of madness, or may this be, finally, with the prolixity of images and figures, or with the search for the most factual sobriety, it has always been, for the authors that we will consider hereunder, about finding one word able to take care of a disadjustment, a disarrange of itself regarding its object. A word, in this sense, closer to its birth than to its meaning, more settled in its enunciation than in what is enunciated, in its modulation than in its expressive result, and that is thus able to give a voice, as Blanchot said about literature «to what does not speak, to what is unmentionable, to what is inhuman, to what is without truth, without justice, without right, where mankind does not recognize itself». Language in front of the gesture must defeat its complacency and open up to what exceeds and deforms it, undoing the coagulated forms of its certainties, opening them to move them towards what, only in this movement, allows itself to be glimpsed.

Now well, every attempt here considered is bonded to a double knot: if, on one hand, one wants to think the gesture in its specific disadjustment with regard to language, on the other hand, it is resorting to the scream, this is, to a certain phonic or sounding expressivity, to certain vibration of the extreme, that this disadjustment becomes –in its way– present. The scream intervenes, in each of the invoked authors, as the modulation of the voice that does not resolve, but exhibits the gestural disadjustment.

Of course, said «exhibition» is only one: it does not answer to the ostensive traditional canons of philosophy and nourishes, on the contrary, of borderline experiences or of scarcely perceivable

sonorities. The scream is what transforms the vocal expression into silence, abolishing that same thing that sustains it and that allows it to maintain the vibration of the tone. If the scream is received as an expression of pain, of suffering, of joy or of pure emotion, at the same time it is being enunciated through the sonority of nonsense, what decomposes and overflows every authentically expressive use of language.

Each chapter of this book intends to constitute a different entrance to the problem of gestural expression, displaying different aspects of the disadjustment of sound. It may not be, in everything else, more than about this: assuming the complexity of the expression as long as it refuses to be reduced to be the medium of a meaning, thus restoring to the expression its infra-expressive layer, its residual materiality, which resists, uncomfortable and insubordinate, before thought and, secretly, in its interstices. The movement traced in the following pages intends to allow the insubordination of the gesture into being action, or the scream into being language, into being the insubordination that, nevertheless, does not provoke a radical fracture, but is produced as a disarray, as a slide, as processes of differentiation, more than an installed difference.

The scream –we are thinking here in the first scream, the scream emitted at birth– is, by the way, a void of the word, a point of rupture that literally allows coming to the world and emerging, without being yet reducible to a real call for the other, nor significant of a significance yet to be found. This scream is a tension, an anxiety of the self, an immanent emergency that has to do with the violence of the rupture, with that of which the sender of the scream must liberate themselves to find the first definition of a place that would make them theirs, to start this way the slow and difficult process of subjectivation that enables one to become «sender» of a message. But in this first scream, in the suspension that is given between the moment of expulsion and the moment in which the scream is sustained under control, there

are a profound void and vertigo, made of fear, of a sensation of heaviness, of dazzling luminosity, of resistances to the becoming. The scream, thought like this, is the body in the expression, what resists all significance before yielding to it sounding becoming. It is the «grain of the voice» that Roland Barthes mentions, which forces to «displace the fringe of contact between music and language», which does not celebrate an absolute rupture of any kind, nor announces itself in the returning to a lost primitiveness, but intones the chant of the externality that projects the first impulse towards intimacy. Point of division, of disadjustments, of rupture, this scream is what is inappropriable of the expression (according to a subjective genitive: the inappropriable that belongs to the expression, that is proper to it), the «loss» always already lost of enunciation.

To interrogate the scream means, in this sense, to bring up the issue of emergency, not from an alleged original state where existence would show its first trauma, but, on the contrary, of the retroactive effect, of the impulse of language to search for the prints of its other (the body); it means to think language as the home, not of the being, as Heidegger suggested, but of the specters of the body that secretly inhabits language as an absent presence, unsettling and suspensive. If «the body is a disjunctive syllogism» as Deleuze said, this is, if it can only be inferred from a negative, the scream is the expression of this disjunctivity, or of the spectrality of the body in language, it is the diction and the «drama» of its impossible plenitude that unsettles the thought and prevents it from shutting itself in the fiction of a knowledge of the closed-down body. Nothing more than a barely perceptible impulse, this scream is the silent call to break the closing, to «make itself heard», as it is said, by the inarticulable complexity of the body.



SOCIOLOGÍA(S) DEL ARTE
Y DE LAS POLÍTICAS CULTURALES
(SOCIOLOGY/IES OF ART
AND CULTURAL POLICIES)

Author. Tomás Peters
Genre. Essay on Art, Aesthetics,
and Education
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Presentation

I do not hesitate in claiming that this book constitutes a milestone in the thinking on art in Latin American sociology. There are, of course, important philosophers, social scientists, and essayists in our medium that have elaborated, throughout the 20th Century, important theoretical considerations on the place of art in society, but the reflection that Tomás Peters presents has the quality of outlining a global itinerary that is inspiring for everyone who is interested in reflecting on art and society. Peters adds, to his several years of teaching experience, an academic work that goes in two main directions: empirical studies on the cultural practices and consumption habits in Chilean and Latin American societies, a work that he has carried out in a collaborative manner with other specialists, and his own reflection on a great variety of topics –arts education, artistic mediation, cultural rights, arts critique, among others– that have enabled him to link theoretical reflection with several forms of artistic expression. As they get into the pages of Sociología(s) del arte y de las políticas culturales, the student and the sociology researcher will be able to understand, with the help of the plot threads that Peters weave along the book, the deep commitment that sociology has had towards arts since the former was constituted as a specific field in the 19th Century, even when it was in the 20th Century that the search for the author was really privileged. Indeed, it was in the last century that the reflection on art became autonomous and forced professionals to attempt various paths of reflection in that field. However, it is still a good idea to read French writer Nathalie Heinich, an author to whom Peters resorts to during the process of substantiating his work, to understand the complexity of the conformation of the field known as sociology of art. Who are the arts sociologists? While attempting to come to an institutional answer, Heinich gives three types of

professional experiences: in first place, those who are related to fields such as history of arts, or literature, produce a sociology of commentaries where they propose interpretations for the works of art. There are also those who collaborate with the administrations, mainly cultural, one may add– that produce surveys and polls, which suppose a deviation from the previous institutional perspective, as the sociologist is not studying the works of art, but the audiences, institutions, budgets, consumption habits, and other related subjects. And, finally, there would be a third mode of being for the sociologist that pertains to those who carry out their activity from inside the institutes and foundations, –not necessarily universities–, and comprehends the two previous kinds of approaches, but goes even further, delving into a certain basic research. It is possible that there are other kinds of practice coming from arts sociologists, but the clues that Heinich presents us are sufficient to understand the approaches that have marked the endeavor of this specialized area of sociology from an institutional point of view. That said, these clues do not solve the problem, but in part it complicates it further, as this noble object of study, the so highly regarded art in modern society, may appear as an obstacle for the specialist when they are judged by the object of their study, rather than by the practice of a good sociology, that is, I would add, a sociology that has internalized the habitus of sociological knowledge, as pointed out by Bourdieu, Chamboredon and Passeron so many years ago.

The proposal elaborated by Tomás Peters around a sociology of art has three important components. The first one is the tracking of some theoretical clues that will allow him to find the sense of art in modern times. Starting from Luhmann, he built a macrohistorical explanation of the difference between the artistic system and the constitution of a specific system in modern times. The Adorno-Benjamin dialectics allows him to concentrate in the contradictions of the artistic experience in the modern world, mainly when it comes to the artistic autonomy under the framework of the politics of dominations in the era of cultural industry.

A second component is the reflection that rises from Howard S. Becker and Pierre Bourdieu. With them, Peters takes us to the worlds of art; that is, he introduces us in the artistic field, properly said, and takes us to the current conditions of the cultural industry, globalization, consumption habits, economy of culture or the debates on creative work, to discuss what is art in an ultratechnological world and of artistic post-autonomy. However, the most relevant contribution he makes is the dialogue he establishes between sociology of art and cultural policies, being these Peters' third design. It does not appear as superfluous to me the fact that, at the famous round table convened by UNESCO in Monaco at the end of 1967, the meeting remembered for kickstarting the international debate on cultural policies, was attended, in addition to public servants and artists, by the main representatives at the time of the sociological studies on arts and culture: Pierre Bourdieu, Augustin Girard, and Richard Hoggart, public servants or researchers related to institutional projects. The field of cultural policies is not equivalent to that of applied sociology, that is, it is not an attempt to produce a given social transformation that derives from some findings coming from the sociology of arts. The debate on cultural policies had a different origin: the discussion on the expansion of the duties of the State in the construction of the Welfare State and the demands coming from several social actors –conservatives, restaurateurs, educators, artists, journalists, intellectuals, and several more–, who pointed out the duty that modern States have both in promoting the expansion of the production and consumption of cultural goods and in making the economic development to be accompanied by culture. Maybe the most relevant difference between sociologists of art and political officers of culture is that the latter held a priori the positive quality of culture, from which it was deduced the State was forced to act in this matter, and the prior, the sociologists of art, basically saw it as a constitutive element of modern times. It is obvious that, having different goals in mind, the disagreement between art scholars and those responsible for cultural policies would become the daily bread. Nevertheless, as Peters points out after analyzing this relation in the fourth and fifth chapters of

this book, the confrontation between sociology of art and deployment of the cultural policies ended up being a virtuous circle from where a new first order sociological area of work emerged, that involved a positioning in the presence of new thematic fields –theoretical in-disciplines, as Peters points out, such as cultural studies and cultural history– that enabled that «the work of art is now understood as a critical-cultural device that intervenes in the social field and that is possible to productivize from the contemporary cultural policies».

Peters' work may take us to two terrains of reflection that are only outlined in this book. The first is the development of the sociology of art in the Latin American context, to which Peter only alludes in scarce references to authors such as García Canclini or Nelly Richard. What is the role that art has played in the constitution of our modernity? How can we analyze the tension between the authoritarianism of revolutionary art and the autonomy that creators and cultural producers? Is there, as Peters points out towards the end of his book, a crisis in Latin American cultural policies, after so much effort has been put into constructing a modern cultural institutionalality?

The other terrain of reflection is the permanent tension between the market and the social movements to produce an autonomous art, which may be the mark of the 21st century under the sphere of neoliberal capitalism. The fall of the Berlin Wall did not only bring the end of an authoritarian regime and the threat of nuclear destruction. Apparently it also ended with a project of emancipation based on human solidarity, the respect for nature and the explosion of creativity in all its dimensions.

The paradox is that albeit the end of the oppression that real socialism maintained over millions of human beings was indeed a relief, the seven decades of socialist regime also represented the greatest experience of humanity in satisfying a liberating yearning.

Now, in the neoliberal stage, the world of displaced by production may be glimpsed in the immediate future. Marginality and inequality deepen in a way that the pretension to rationalize economy and culture

from an extreme individualization is confronted by those who ask themselves what advantages will they obtain from unleashing personal initiative and increasing the value of the neoliberal subject, when it is rather the old family, community, neighborhood, and class corporation the one that allows the majorities to find possibilities to participate of the distribution of social resources.

If the social movements, inherent to social life under any circumstance, have lost the utopia of an egalitarian society run by a State that plans production and consumption, and if the collapse of the traditional world due to the extreme greed in the exploitation of nature, pollution or climate change prevent us to think of a rural and communal arcadia that supposedly had existed before, what nowadays moves many social groups is the construction of new solidary bonds while vindicating individualism and personal freedom. It is a notable paradox that in these times of extreme individualization, even the social movements are neoliberal subjects of other kinds. Facing entrepreneurship and individual valuation, the movements of the neoliberal era that have lost the compass of great utopias vindicate the necessity to find a way of existing in the world that comes from resisting the tendencies of extreme commercialization.

In this way, the current performance of social movements has led them to favor their artistic expression as well as the political manifestation and debate in the media. However, this presents a difficult conciliation between aesthetic practice and political activism. Just like in the debates on the commitment of the artist and creative freedom, the middle ground to avoid one part affecting the other resides in the characterization of the role of the artist or the collective creator. How can one expect commitment or critical spirit and, at the same time, demand a creative freedom that, allegedly, may go all the way to a lack of critical spirit? There is no way of solving this dilemma without incurring some contradictions. Change in reality supposes a process, and, through diverse projects, the shift results in the consolidation of an artistic perspective of political activism. They are modes of production of aesthetic forms that are clearly a theoretical political option that positions them between the options of social action and the traditional

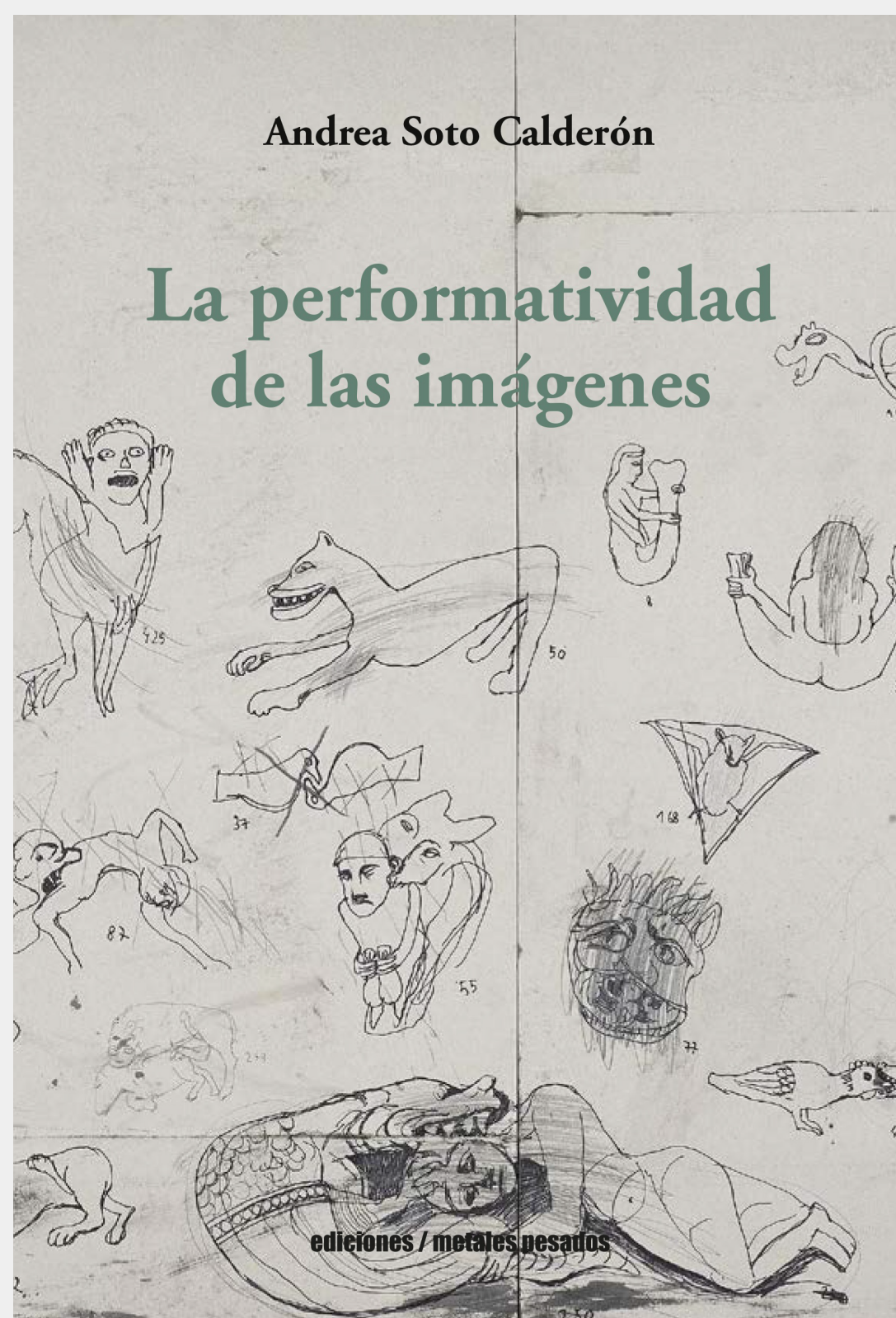
demand for the autonomy of the arts. The shift from substantive to adjective –from activist art to artistic activism– becomes troublesome, as the loss of the artist’s individuality is replaced, not by the collective, but by the movement itself.

I am the first person to welcome Tomás Peters’ book for its permanent interrogation on the ways in which art constitutes society as the latter transforms art.

Eduardo Nivón Bolán

UAM Iztapalapa, México, January, 2020





LA PERFORMATIVIDAD
DE LAS IMÁGENES
(THE PERFORMATIVITY OF IMAGES)

Author. Andrea Soto Calderón
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Prologue

Since at least a couple of decades, most of the critical reflections relating to the images are constantly maintaining a sustained lamentation, a compassion for the agony of our present that, it is said, is characterized by a mixture of technological refinement and an extreme stupidity, a loss of interest in the reality of life and a radical desire to flee the body to surrender to the seduction of the images.

This way, most of these critical reflections describe a progressive process of derealization of life, in which concrete reality as a whole is despised, a material anemia that only devours specters; sunken in a swamp lacking any foundation, in which there is no regularity that may reassure us. A generalized disorientation that refers not only to a lack of horizon to move forward to, but also to our profound incapacity to imagine, create, and invent as well.

This book would like to draw a digressive line in this vast theoretical landscape that situates the image in a type of radical alterity against which thought has built its true power. Since Plato, at least, we are breathing an air of the times that is constantly actualizing: that suggestive image of a cavern in which men were chained in the company of shadows that they thought were real is not very different in its structure from the one that would later follow Moses' tradition and that, in more contemporary terms, is modulated as a critique of the society of spectacle.

The critique in current terms does not only fall into the power that appearances hold, in their capacity to inhibit reflection and true knowledge, in their reduction to an immediate emotional or temporary experience, but especially into the belief that they are powerfully manipulable

elements within the dominant technologies of simulation and mass mediation. The question that never stops being present under different forms is how to escape the seductions and inconsistencies of the images, how to traverse these surfaces to access the truth they conceal.

In a cultural atmosphere where to look is a type of illness, an ailment, a disease that attacks us with a devouring fury, I propose to explore our imaginative forces, to delve into the functioning of the images, recover the potency that resides in our gaze; not that one that is frozen on the screens, but the one that pierces us like a lightning in which we can catch sight of what awaits us.

The weariness of the gaze

The first time I heard someone talk about the weariness of the gaze was to Norval Baitello Jr., in a colloquium about semiotics of the communication and culture in São Paulo. The eye does not see anymore, the gaze does not catch sight anymore, said Norval. A voice that expanded in his book *La era de la iconofagia* (The era of iconophagia). Such was his determination and his accurate diagnosis in relation to the contextual disconnections of the images, that it seemed impossible that this certainty would not settle. Our eyes, by seeing so much, are not seeing anymore. Actually, Norval does not use the expression weariness of the gaze, but «the ailment of the eyes», taking this expression from a chapter of a book by Dietmar Kamper, *Bildstörungen. Im Orbit des Imaginären* (Image disturbances. In the orbit of the imaginary). His claim is categorical: the abundance of images and visual stimuli drowns us and anesthetizes us, preventing us from digesting what we are seeing; at the same time, these images demand our bodies, they devour us.

Between a ruthless critique of the dominance of vision in Western culture and the denunciation of not being able to see, there are contours and tensions circulating that question the gaze and will not stop interrogating that Aristotelian maxim in which the eye is the most noble of the senses. The gaze is used as a way of fixing the tremor of the incident that is the self.

The critique to the excess of images does not begin with *Mythologies* by Roland Barthes, or with *The Society of the Spectacle* by Guy Debord; it is prior, it goes back, at least, to the late 19th Century, with the increasing concern for the organization of the sensible multiplicity of messages. However, I ask myself how fertile is the critique, in terms of giving us tools for the present, if it is only limited to a denounce. In fact, we could question the existence of an excess of images. There is no doubt that there is a visual excess, but coming from a hegemony that keeps repeating the same images. Even so, the biggest problem may be all these realities that do not have images, that is, that lack of the ability to be imagined. Without a doubt, there is a dominant system of information that selects and deletes all singularities of images, extracting them from their contexts, depleting them of meaning, and transforming them into icons, which is not the same as saying that there are too many images. The paradox that many analyses conceal is that in conditions of an exponential growth of the quantity and circulation of images in our everyday life, the deflation of the images is growing in an identical proportion. In this sense, we may state that there is a shortage of images, this is, of operators of difference. In the visual industry, the consumption model prevails, collapsing every practice that would introduce a troublesome dynamic. Visual inflation is at the same time an impoverishment of meaning, of the creation, and multiplication of senses. Thus, the problem is not so much the excess of images but precisely the contrary, their shortage. Maybe one of the greatest problems we have to develop a critical thinking of visual culture is

that, among the suspicions of their abundance and the perils of their excesses, we have distrusted so much in images that we have run out of tools to explore their potencies, their intervals, their abilities to unite differences, that double operation at play on its analogy and dissimilarity.

For this reason, it is unfortunate that many theories on images do not enable us any understanding of the functions of the image in the definition of the meaning of the common, the meaning by which a society learns to recognize itself, from the place of representations in the forms of social organization. Because images are not reduced to what is visible, they are devices that create a certain sense of reality. For this same reason, they have also the ability to interrupt the mediatic flow, they have a disruptive character. There is not only the reality of commodities, of those who produce them and that consume them; every image has its shadows, its remains that do not stop multiplying and interrogating that reality that presents itself as unique, as if the necessary character of things could not be lost. The appearance, albeit is different, cannot be separated from the being.

If one wants to take a critical perspective on visual culture or even on images, the critique cannot be against the images; neither contrasting them with the temporality of the reading, but with them. Treating with images may not be something to do with the gaze, at least not in the way it has been constructed. It is also true that after John Berger, to look will never mean the same again. Some of this is insinuated by Georges Didi-Huberman when he says that the act of seeing was literally opened, it became torn. It is possible that our own eyes are crammed with logotypes, with icons, which is not the same as saying images. Rather than the weariness of the gaze, I would say that we are talking about a disconnection, but at the same time I consider it relevant to remember that every disconnection carries the potency of the links to be built.

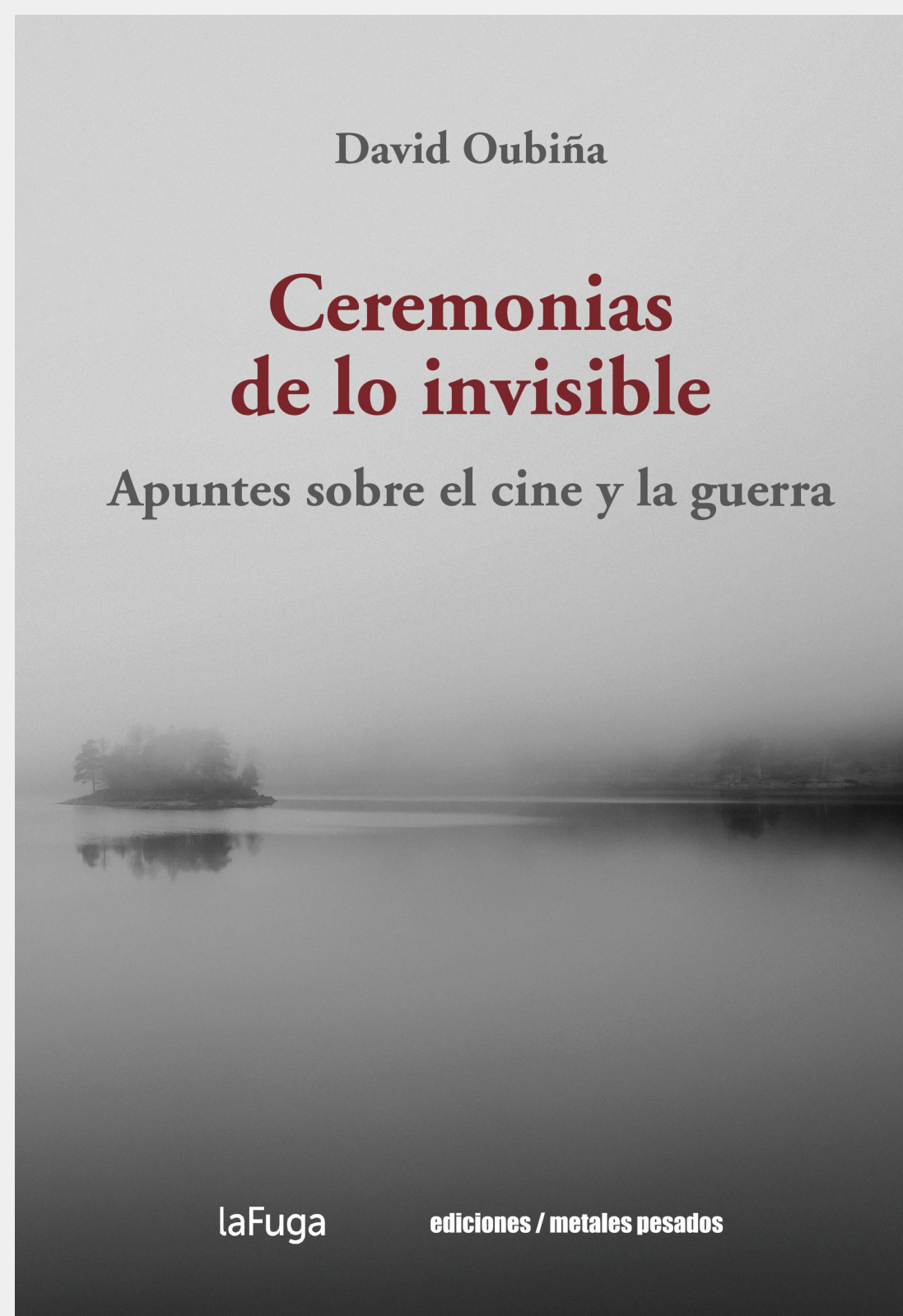
In a short story titled «Love is Blind», Boris Vian imagined what the effects of fog would be on the existent relationships. The inhabitants of a great city wake up one morning surrounded by a light and opaque fog, that begins to modify each of their habits progressively. The needs that appearances impose become obsolete and the inhabitants begin a process of collective experimentation. Loves become free, thanks to the permanent nudity of the body. Orgies begin to sprout everywhere. Skin, hands, flesh recover their prerogatives as «the domain of the possible is extended when there is no fear that the light will be turned on». Unable to maintain a fog that they have not contributed to create, the inhabitants fall apart when «the radio points out that some scholars have noticed a regular regression of the phenomenon». Taking into account all of this, everyone decides to gouge their eyes out to continue being happy¹.

An intense commitment to seeing, with the experience that the fog enables us, with feeding the night in which the gaze is refined but, above everything else, with tightening the bonds, working in cultivating the relationships, as they are the ones that enable our sight.

What would be that responsibility of having eyes? The responsibility to see? How does the eye bends? How does it fold to contain?

The relation with the images is not so much about what is gathered by the gaze, nor the way in which it isolates, but about a surface that one encounters, a confusion, a belief that moves us blindly. Even when the history of art has carried out systematic attempts to transform the gaze in a discipline, embracing images has little to do with being before something, with modulating the justness of that distance. To look does not fit in a gaze.

¹ Boris Vian, «El amor es ciego», El Lobo hombre, Editorial Tusquets, Barcelona, [1949] 1987. This paragraph replicates, in a partially altered way, the analysis that Tiquin makes of Vian in The Cybernetic Hypothesis, Antonio Machado Libros S.A., Madrid, [2001] 2015, p. 174.



CEREMONIAS DE LO INVISIBLE
(CEREMONIES OF THE INVISIBLE)

Autor. David Oubiña

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and Education

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Prologue

The death of Belmondo in Breathless; the death of Nicholson in The Passenger; the death of Dominique Sanda in The Conformist; the death of Welles/Falstaff in Chimes at Midnight; the one of Paulo Martins in Entranced Earth or the one of Dirk Bogarde/Von Aschenbach in Death in Venice; the one of Lautaro Murúa in Invasion; the agony of Harriet Andersson in Cries and Whispers; the delayed death of Raúl Salas in The Absentee; the death of Anna Magnani in Roma, Open City; the one of Brando in Apocalypse Now; the one of Gorchakov in Nostalghia; the death of Bebán trying to climb an uncrossable wall in Juan Moreira, and the one of Cybulski wallowing among the laundry drying at the sun in Ashes and Diamonds; the inconsolable death of the replicant in Blade Runner, but also the happy death of those crucified while they imagine the bright side of life in Life of Brian; the long death of the mother accompanied by the son in that film by Sokurov; the one of William Blake in Dead Man, when he begins his Orphic voyage through that river that will take him to where the spirits dwell; the cruel and unexpected death of the old bear in Sawdust and Tinsel, when the tamer unleashes his fury on him; the death of Falconetti in The Passion of Joan of Arc, and the one of Anna Karina in My Life to Live; the overly realistic death of Nicholas Ray in Lighting over Water; the terrible death of the boy in Germany, Year Zero; the death of Jeanne Moureay in Jules and Jim, and even the one of King Kong in the film by Cooper and Schoedsack (because, as Borges used to say, «an ape falling 14 meters down is clearly delightful»). I remember all those deaths as I saw them once in the cinema and they remained imprinted in my memories forever.

The two essays contained in this book enter through this funereal territory, but are deaths of the other kind. One of the texts revolves around Shoah (Claude Lanzmann, 1985) and studies the entirety of that movie (and only that movie): a very extensive documentary on the systematic

annihilation of Jewish people during the Second World War, whose effects go through the whole 20th Century. The other text is focused on a brief moment during Ugetsu, Tales of the Waves after the Rain Moon Kenji Mizoguchi, 1953), albeit he tries to use this scene like a prism to cast his vision over the whole work of this director: it is a fictional scene, about a singular and fortuitous death, in the middle of Japan's civil war, in the 16th Century. It would be hard to find two films that differ more than these two; but that is precisely what motivated me to display them as a diptych: I thought they worked in a complementary way, as if they were in separate extremes of the same equation. What do they have, that is not like any other death I remember? In other movies, the characters are always moving towards their deaths, they have been looking for it: It is an act that is deserved, compensatory, or heroic. There is always a type of poetic justice or a need for the dramatic curve that invariably leads them there. In Shoah and Ugetsu, it is not about death represented in images, but the way in which the image reflects about death. It is not death embodied, but what cinema can say about it. About death in general. Either because there is a meticulous planning (the complex logistics on which the bureaucratic machinery of extinction rests) or because it contingency occurs without warning (the striking wound, that knocks down, like a lightning, the woman in the middle of the woods, leaving her closer to perplexity than horrified), everything tends to abstraction, to evanescence, to ineffability. As if the movie were insufficient and it was admitted that it did not show. Or as if, precisely, it discovered its meaning in the inability to give visibility to that which, as Norbert Elias says— always happens to other people¹. You cannot see nothing, or you see very little: what is shown matters because of its conceptual value. Nothing of the spectacular and dramatic character with which crimes are usually displayed on screen. Then, maybe, one should admit that the resistance to see is also part of the image (or, at least, of some images).

1 Norbert Elias, La soledad de los moribundos, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2009, p. 19.

Death does not fit entirely in any representation. It is the opposite of creating images. Every decease supposes, in first place, an incredulity: this is not possible. The representation, then, comes to negate the absence. It is a mode of survival in effigie. Hence, the need for funeral masks, the success of spirit photos, the primitive films that were promoted as a way to retain «your loved ones long after they were gone». Grieving the death of his mother, Barthes revisits old family portraits and writes a whole book about photography, but the only picture he does not show is hers: «I cannot show the Picture of the Greenhouse. That photo exists only for me»². Mourning is, indeed, private. You do not look at these images except to find there what they attempt to restore; you recall the image of the deceased —you recall the deceased thanks to the image— to open the door for them to transmigrate and give them a new existence in memory. That is what those who mourn do: getting used to memory (but precisely: One does not want to get used!).

Loss of loved ones is inevitably absurd and unfair. A nonsense. How could this happen? Why did she have to die? Why him, of all people? It is impossible to understand. On the other hand, casualties during a battle have a motive and an objective. You always die for (in defense of) a cause. And all of these caused are claimed to be just. The challenge of cinema when depicting war, catastrophes, or massacres consists in showing, even when it knows, that images carry the risk of contributing into making the horror more acceptable. The possibility of seeing mitigates the anguish aroused by the unknown and, frequently, movies collaborate in making the death of others something more tolerable. Didi-Huberman discusses with Gérard Wajcman about the necessity or not of showing a few images of the Jewish Holocaust. These photographs, out of frame, blurry, ruined (those photos that are ruins), taken in secret before the doors of a crematory, show very little; therefore, according to Wajcman, they show nothing, as

2 Roland Barthes, La cámara opaca. Nota sobre la fotografía, Barcelona, Paidós, 1997, pp. 130-131.

the absolute and heinous totality of the Holocaust remains invisible. For Didi-Huberman, however, it will always be preferable to see than not to see: we must «show what cannot be seen»³. But, how to show, if any image –even involuntary– contributes to the habit, to the insensibility and, in the end, to oblivion? Viewers get quickly used to blood, to violence, to humiliations (but precisely: One should not get used!). The thing that Didi-Huberman understands is that showing is not just exhibiting, but to display the image in such a way that that what is invisible ends up being, nevertheless, evident. Why should we expect images to leave their secrets in plain sight? One should interrogate them as a valuable witness, one should work with them, one should see in them what they have seen.

But how to remember an image? Walter Benjamin says that «memory is not an instrument for exploring the past, but its setting. It is the medium of what was once lived, just as the earth is the medium in which the dead cities remain buried »⁴. Going to the past means to become a digger. When Hannah Arendt visits the cemetery of Portbou in search of Benjamin's tomb, she is surprised because his name is not written anywhere. Probably his remains ended up in a mass grave. However, right there, on a rock, there is a plate where a famous quote from the philosopher: «There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism». Maybe Benjamin found his place there, among the NN, among these nameless bones, mixed with those that were excluded by history. The digger, then, does not restore the past, but is able to trace a topography of the memory that may bring some justice to the forgotten ones. In Profit Motive and the Whispering Wind (2007), John Gianvito goes over the history of political and social struggles in the United States throughout the four centuries. He does it exclusively through an amazing accumulation of tombstones and commemorative plates. There are no people, there are no interviews, there are no actions, there is no speech. Only the enumeration of funeral

monuments. So, it may be understood: for 58 minutes, the movie does not do anything but to thread a series of images that remain on screen the time necessary to read a name, some dates, and a brief epitaph that place on record an unwavering struggle. Gianvito builds a history of the United States through those popular struggles that were suppressed and forgotten in the traditional books: First Nations people, African American people, women, pacifists, libertarians, anarchists. Profit Motive and the Whispering Wind is a passionately political film because, through simple observation, is able to reveal in the image a profoundly questioning dimension. As they have been recorded by a camera, now we know all these names that have been left at the margins of history.

There is no ostentation in Gianvito's gesture. It is an impoverished image (just as, in an inverse sense, they talk about enriched uranium for the manufacturing of nuclear weapons), not because it is weak or vulnerable, but because it has been stripped of any composure, any pose, or any spectacularism that would inevitably determine what is considered a form of oblivion. This risk has been already established at the end of Night and Fog: « We survey these ruins with a heartfelt gaze, certain that the old monster lies crushed beneath the rubble. We pretend to regain hope as the image recedes, as though we've been cured of that plague. We tell ourselves that it was all confined to one country, one point in time. We turn a blind eye to what surrounds us and a deaf ear to the never-ending cries». There is a fundamental separation between believing that it has already been shown and knowing that it will never end showing (although, precisely because of that, it is necessary to keep on trying). There is in this perseverance an ethics of the image. However, not because it intends to see more every time. These movies exist because some things –certainly not those of that era in plain sight– can only be intuited when they are cast on a screen. Since films are made of images, we take for granted that they have the duty of

3 Georges Didi-Huberman, Imágenes pese a todo. Memoria visual del Holocausto, Barcelona, Paidós, 2004, p. 197.

4 Walter Benjamin, «Crónica de Berlín», en Infancia en Berlín hacia 1900, Buenos Aires, Cuenco de Plata, 2016, p. 79.

reflecting the world as it is for us. But even when they are there to be seen, images are not forced to exhibit anything: maybe the important thing is precisely what does not appear in them. As Michael Taussig pointed out by Michael Taussig, who follows Arendt steps and travels to the graveyard in Portbou to pay homage to Benjamin, «What glass or stone monument, what names of people, or what profound literary quotes may compete with invisibility?»⁵. There are some phenomena (death is one of them) that can only be glimpsed from the distance and without wild gesticulations because, before any evident attack, they slip away like a distrusting animal. How close can we get? From where should we observe? What is the adequate distance that the camera should adopt? Total visibility soon gets mixed with the despotic dreams of fascism. For this reason, before the arrogance of an absolute gaze, the deviation of the images is a necessary ceremony to intuit what is invisible...



ENSEÑANDO A SENTIR (TEACHING TO FEEL)

Autoría. Macarena García González

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and Education

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Introduction

It begins with a forest, a river, and an «old cabin» where a mother with her son live, when death arrives: «thin, shrivel, bony». Death takes her son away, a baby, crossing rivers, forests, and mountains. The mother goes out to find him. In her path, this mother must keep tearing away parts of her body to continue: the eyes to cross the river, her legs to be able to enter the forest, and her right arm to open a cave in the mountain. Finally, she –personified as a fox with blindfolded eyes and wooden legs– arrives where death lives. And she, a skull dressed in a military uniform, admits that she had «never seen such an abnegation». And tells her that she is going to give her child back to her. However, this son is already dead. At this point, with an empty cradle and a burning stove, ends The Mother and Death¹.

The Mother and Death is a book meant for children or, at least, a book published by a renowned Mexican collection of children's literature, «A la Orilla del Viento», by Fondo de Cultura Económica en México. It is also, along with others such as Lejren by Oskar K and The Island by Armin Greder, one of the books that have motivated the investigations and questions that guide Enseñando a sentir. Repertorios éticos en la ficción infantil. What kind of emotions do we allow in children's literature? Who decides which stories are appropriate for them? How do we talk about difficult subjects? Is it possible to find hope in pessimism? In this book, we ask about the emotional repertoire in fiction for children as another way of approaching themes of justices, inequity, absences. We approach the emotional in terms of social framework, this is, not from a traditional psychologizing perspective in which emotions express an interiority and are structured based on the so-called basic emotions –happiness, fear, sadness, wrath, disgust, and surprise– by as a social and cultural flux quite more complex, in which it is of little worth to

¹ Laiseca, A. y Arispe, N. (2015).

distinguish between an interior and an exterior. That way of understanding emotions and affections works as a guideline for a new approach to this interweaving between art and education, between aesthetics and pedagogy, that constantly appears in literature and media for children.

To say that a work for children is didactic is considered a way of degrading its aesthetic potential. In the cultural field for childhood this categorization is usually avoided: didactics, lectures, treating the audience as subjects that have not formed yet their aesthetic sense. History of art (and of philosophy) already drags numerous tensions around these cultural products aimed towards, this constant tension between the pretension of autonomy of the artistic object and the conditions that regulate its institutions. This book is about fictions that are recommended to the youngest readers, and goes along without wanting to renounce to understand what this condition of mediation implies, this tension between pedagogy and art. However, we head ourselves towards a specific dimension: the way books are used to teach how to feel, and under what notions of ethics and justice we can make sense of these emotional repertoires. The idea that books are a valuable instrument to emotionally educate children has been weaved over a more extensive argument on how literature helps develop moral imagination, that is, the ability to put ourselves in the shoes of the others, to imagine other lives and their griefs². US philosopher Martha Nussbaum claims that reading would states that reading would increase empathy on readers and would set the bases for democratic coexistence³. Nussbaum argues from an Aristotelian tradition, in which rationality requires emotion for the formation of judgement; according to her, fiction –particularly novels– would allow us to try out possible perspectives on the world, and the difference would prepare us to lead better lives.

With the charge of positivism over academic investigation, this argument has been submitted to the rules of empiric production of knowledge. Cognitive psychologists David Kidd and Emanuele Castano, researchers at Harvard, conducted studies with which they would have proved that those who read

«quality» literature (in their project, texts that were awarded by the National Book Award of the United States) develop more theory of the mind –the ability to suppose what another person is thinking or feeling– than those who read bestsellers or non-fiction literature. In 2013 they published the results in Science magazine, creating a new truth for the crusade for reading for the education of empathy. Kidd and Castano, psychologists without any background on literature studies, begin some of their articles quoting Barack Obama and his reflection on how he attributes his formation as a citizen to the reading of novels and his learning that the world is «complicated and full of greys»⁴... Besides Obama, Kidd and Castano also quote Martha Nussbaum and Jerome Brunner, a cognitive psychologist with a great influence in the field of education, to create an argument about up to what point is the conviction that reading helps us to enhance our interpersonal abilities is transversal. When they need to interpret why the award-winning literary works are those that would give better tools, they draw upon Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia: the novel conforms to different voices and visions of the world that problematize the truth. In Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics⁵, Mikhail Bakhtin illustrates how the characters of the Russian author are autonomous consciences that confront their author. This lack of authorial perspective of the novel, the «polyphonic novel», as Bakhtin calls it, would force the readers to participate so that the story makes sense. And this involvement, claim Kidd and Castano, would increase our ability to put ourselves in the shoes of other people's shoes.

In a similar line, although without empirical studies, Nussbaum bets for the value of the realist novel of the 19th Century to sentimentally educate us on the value of democracy. We do not find in Nussbaum, nor in Kidd and Castano any reflection on the value of writings that have been marginalized from the processes of canonicity. How do testimonial writings manage to produce that ability to put oneself in the place of the other? Which are the repertoires of the otherness that we make available through what we consider to be literary? The classification of the literary seems to be an unappealable, evident condition,

2 Zunshine, L. (2006). Why we read fiction: Theory of mind and the novel. Ohio State University Press

3 Nussbaum, M. C. y Gardini, C. (1997). Justicia poética: La imaginación literaria y la vida pública. Andrés Bello. Nussbaum, M. C. (2010). Not for profit: Why democracy needs the humanities (vol. 2). Princeton University Press..

4 Obama (2015), en Kidd, D., y Castano, E. (2018). «Reading literary fiction can improve theory of mind». Nature human behaviour, 2(9), 604.

5 (1986). Fondo de Cultura Económica.

even when it is guided by dialogue. Martha Nussbaum argues that a background in philosophy is less crucial than reading novels precisely because in them meaning is not produced from a regime of the truth, and allows us to inspect our own disposition. The situated and contingent thinking of narrative, she states, the setting in motion of the ethical options in its characters, would allow us for a citizen's life in which the key to coexistence is the ability to come to agreements. Even more, this ability would be crucial to face the threatening future that US philosophy has forecasted in its latest writings.⁶ If reading literature makes you a better citizen, literary reading in children becomes an objective for the State. Reading encouragement programs operate, in a more or less explicit way, under this premise: as long as more children read, a better democratic coexistence we will have. This is not new. Children's literature has been stalked for its pedagogical functions ever since it has been recorded. Its existence as a segregated offer arose, indeed, from the need to count on texts of religious instruction and was later developed into publications that would warn on the dangers of modern life, a route that is followed by Jack Zipes in his wonderful *Sticks and Stones. The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*. Books for children also circulate nowadays –in times when we recognize their aesthetic value– in a field constantly patrolled by adults. It is adults –both conservatives and progressists– who decide what is to be published, what is to be recommended, what is to be bought, and what is to be read. These adults make decisions in terms of what they know –or they think they know– of the preferences and needs of children. This is a problem that has been treated for a long time in the field of critical studies of children's literature since in 1984 US scholar Jacqueline Rose published *The case of Peter Pan, or, the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, an essay where the figure of Peter Pan is used to talk about how fiction for children would be based on fantasies adults have on what is childhood. un ensayo en el que se usa la figura de Peter Pan para hablar de cómo la ficción para niñas y niños estaría basada en fantasías adultas sobre lo que es la infancia. «Children's fiction is based on the idea

that there is a child who is simply there to be addressed and that speaking to it could be simple. It is an idea whose innocent generality covers up a multitude of sins», writes Rose on the first page of the essay that gave way to a lengthy debate. Rose draws attention to adultism in cultural production for children. Years later, María Nikolajeva coined the term aetonormativity to talk about how certain ideas on age and maturity produce norms. Nikolajeva is inspired by how queer theory has installed the notion of heteronormativity to draw attention to how what appears to be normal is what belongs to adulthood, and the deviation or difference is what belongs to childhood. For Nikolajeva, narrative voices and perspective in children's literature show us this power relation in which adulthood is normal and childhood are presented as others, different, immature.

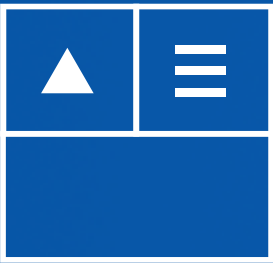
South African researcher Karin Murris delves further into the problem on how to address to children taking the concept of «epistemic injustice» to note that the underaged are not considered as knowing subjects and are constantly interpreted or explained by adults. Murris moves forward her argument from the postulates of Philosophy for Children, which, in very general lines, seeks to acknowledge them as epistemic subjects, towards post-humanist philosophy. Post-humanism is one of the main contemporary philosophical schools of thought that attempt to make sense of the uncertain planetary future by elaborating a critique on how the human condition was philosophically produced revolving around the figure of a Western, white, heterosexual, Eurocentric, educated and abled man. Karen Barad, a science philosopher in the USA, says that post-humanism welcomes «females, slaves, children, animals, and other dispossessed (who were exiled by Aristotle from the land of knowledge two millennia ago)». Post-humanism goes towards new epistemologies and new ethics from where to produce knowledge. This way we can think of this philosophical movement in relation to a cultural shift, which is well illustrated by the arrival of a figure such as Greta Thunberg, a neurodiverse teenager whose activism managed to change the discourse on the environmental crisis, while changing at the same time those

6 Nussbaum, M. C. (2019). *La monarquía del miedo: Una mirada filosófica a la crisis política actual*. Ediciones Paidós



about a supposed apathy of the youth and the relevance of turning them into decision-makers. Greta's campaign –which, as she herself has highlighted, is the one of a privileged girl who has been allowed to be listened– has become an inspiration to rethink the notion of child and juvenile agency, and how academic research must reformulate itself to be able to understand it and be part of it.

Enseñando a sentir. Repertorios éticos en la ficción infantil inquires into the adult hopes in that literature and fiction will guide us –or rather, will guide children– towards better and fairer relations (and affectivities). This inquiry is nourished both from a critical reading of literary and cultural texts aimed towards children, as from an approach to the encounters between «works» and «recipient», readers and books, fictions, and children. Thus, we combine the more traditional textual analysis, that looks into the way in which works answer and produce ideological frameworks, with an approach to what in the field of studies of children's literature is called «reading responses», in the tradition of the aesthetics of reception by Wolfgang Iser and the school of Constance. The combination between these two approaches does not follow the logic of them corresponding to different epistemologies, but rather the fact that they are possible genres to bring up questions. Thus, we intercalate the analysis of narrative texts (linguistic, visual, and audiovisual) with observations on how these works circulate and are produced in different spaces, exploring another way of creating critique, in the sense of critique as a mode of approaching a text. Here it would be in debt with the proposition of a post-critique by Rita Felski, who proposes to pay less attention to the ideologies that would be «behind» the works and more to the way in which aesthetic texts captivate or horrify us. What follows is that there is not only one interpretation of what works of art mean, but multiple ways of thinking their relations with their contexts. In this case, I am trying to outline how works made for children display the confidences and fears of adults on child emotionality. I also attempt to make this approach in order to integrate my own subjectivity as a researcher, without it being central at all, but still being part of this interweaving of relations between children and texts.



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